

## **District Work Period Watch: Constituents Demand** **Answers from GOP on Health Care**

*It's been a long week for Republican Members of Congress, as constituents continue to speak out against their efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a real plan to replace it.*

*Some Republicans hid from their constituents:*

“In Channahon, Ill., constituents taped a headshot of GOP Rep. Adam Kinzinger to the top of a suit and set it up at the center of the stage so protesters could speak to it. In Pennsylvania, protesters who were hoping for a town hall with Republican Sen. Pat Toomey set up a suit at the center of the stage in his place. In Idaho, constituents used a cardboard cutout of their representative. And in San Diego, people taped photos of Rep. Darrell Issa's (R) face to a cutout image from the ‘Where's Waldo’ books.” [The Hill, [2/22/17](#)]

“In New York, they derided Rep. Elise Stefanik for canceling town halls just a week after publishing a report, titled ‘Millennials & the GOP,’ urging more members of Congress to hold them.” [Washington Post, [2/24/17](#)]

“One lawmaker, Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Tex.), issued a statement this week blaming his decision not to hold a town hall in person on “the threat of violence at town hall meetings.” [Washington Post, [2/24/17](#)]

*And for the Republicans willing to hear constituents out, they received an earful. In districts across the country, Republicans heard from hundreds of constituents who don't want to see the Affordable Care Act repealed because they know it means that they will lose coverage, lose benefits, or see their health care costs skyrocket:*

### **Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL)**

“Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) faced **at least 500 constituents** in a crowded bowling alley for nearly two hours Thursday evening in this quiet suburb of Pensacola, where he was **grilled about his relationship with Trump**, his stance on **repealing the Affordable Care Act** and his proposal to **abolish the Environmental Protection Agency**.” [Washington Post, [2/24/17](#)]

### **Rep. Dave Brat (R-VA)**

“Brat held the meeting in a tiny town in Nottoway County, a rural community carried by Trump in November. It's about an hour south of where most in Brat's district live, but **that didn't stop a stream of people from driving into town and filling up the town hall, with hundreds shut out on the sidewalk...** His answers seemed to antagonize most in the crowd of 150... **Some of the loudest jeers came over Republicans' promise to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act as people held up red cards signaling their discontent.** ‘The problem is Obamacare has just collapsed,’ said Brat... **The crowd shouted in response, ‘No, it has not!’**” [Washington Post, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Rep. Scott Taylor (R-VA)**

“For the second night in a row, U.S. Rep. Scott Taylor... faced a crowd of supporters, angry protestors and constituents questions during a town hall in York County ... ‘I believe my party has been sent to Washington to repeal Obamacare,’ Taylor said **over a chorus of boos.**” [Daily Press, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)**

“Representative Marsha Blackburn may have expected to draw a friendly crowd by scheduling a town hall-style meeting in a Tennessee community that had voted overwhelmingly for President Trump, but she instead faced a hurricane-strength blast of disapproval on Tuesday. Ms. Blackburn, an eight-term Republican, was **sharply questioned about a wide range of issues that have unsettled Mr. Trump’s first month in office, including health care... Bruce Sullivan asked why Republicans had no real replacement for the Affordable Care Act after seven years.**” [New York Times, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA)**

“Sen. Joni Ernst had planned a ‘veterans roundtable’ in this tiny eastern Iowa town -- far away from the anti-Trump and pro-Obamacare protests that have filled cities in recent weeks... But when Ernst arrived, the room was full, with dozens more crammed into the doorway and spilling into an atrium and adjacent hallways... Lisa Pence, 35, a stay-at-home mom and former teacher from Dubuque, was in the doorway... **She and others complained outside afterward that Ernst spent just two minutes addressing Republican plans to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. ‘She didn’t answer anything about health care. Nothing,’** said Pence’s mother-in-law, Lois Pence, 57.” [CNN, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA)**

“**Anxious and agitated constituents** of Mr. Grassley’s clapped and yelled out in frustration in a rural county that voted overwhelmingly for Mr. Trump. Mr. Petersen, the vice chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party’s Rural Caucus, gave a stern warning about the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. ‘With all due respect, sir, you’re the man that talked about the death panels,’ Mr. Petersen said. **‘We’re going to create one great big death panel in this country.’**” [New York Times, [2/21/17](#)]

### **Senator Tom Cotton (R-AS)**

“Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) faced a wave of opposition during a town hall meeting on Wednesday as droves of protesters jeered and heckled him over topics ranging from the Affordable Care Act to Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election... At one point, **one attendee asked everyone in the audience who had been affected by Obamacare to stand up, prompting what appeared to be hundreds of people to rise from their seats.**” [The Hill, [2/22/17](#)]

***With control of the White House and both chambers of Congress, the future of our health care system is Republicans’ responsibility. Democrats will continue to work to protect Americans’ access to quality, affordable health care and will hold the GOP accountable for their efforts to take away coverage and increase costs.***